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271546Z Apr 00

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ACTION AF-00

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	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00	EUR-01
	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-01	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00
	LAB-01	L-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01
	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00	SP-00	STR-00
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FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5884  
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 HARARE 002297

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF A/S SUSAN RICE, DAS SCHNEIDMAN

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E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/27/00  
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PINS](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [ZI](#)  
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR PUTS HOME AFFAIRS MINISTER ON NOTICE  
TO STOP THE POLITICAL VIOLENCE

REF: A) HARARE 2237, B) HARARE 2221, C) HARARE 2236

CLASSIFIED BY POLITICAL OFFICER MAKILA JAMES, REASONS  
1.5 B/D.

1. (C) SUMMARY: ON APRIL 26 THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS REPEATED THE PARTY LINE TO AMBASSADOR MCDONALD THAT THE OCCUPATIONS OF THE COMMERCIAL FARMS IS A "POLITICAL ISSUE" WITH WHICH NEITHER HE NOR THE POLICE MAY INTERFERE, AS LONG AS THE TAKEOVERS ARE PEACEFUL. DABENGWA MAINTAINS THAT THE POLICE ARE UNDER INSTRUCTION TO INVESTIGATE AND ARREST THOSE WHO HARM PEOPLE OR PROPERTY ON THE FARMS. TO DATE, HOWEVER, WE HAVE SEEN NO EVIDENCE OF ANY ARREST FOR THE MURDERS OF TWO WHITE COMMERCIAL FARMERS OR THE HUNDREDS OF BLACK FARM WORKERS WHO HAVE BEEN INTIMIDATED, RAPED, OR KILLED. THE MINISTER EXPRESSED A GREATER DESIRE TO STOP THE WIDESPREAD POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN URBAN AREAS, BUT AGAIN HAS YET TO DEMONSTRATE STRONG LEADERSHIP BY PUBLICIZING ANY INVESTIGATIONS OR ARRESTS FOLLOWING SEVERAL DEATHS. OPPOSITION PARTY MEMBERS SAY THE POLICE ARE UNDER INSTRUCTIONS NOT TO MAKE ARRESTS IN ELECTION-RELATED CRIMES AS THEY TOO ARE DEEMED "POLITICAL MATTERS." IN OUR JUDGMENT, PUTTING AN END TO POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN ZIMBABWE RESTS WITH PRESIDENT MUGABE WHO CONTINUES TO

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SHOW NO INCLINATION TO STOP THE FARM OCCUPATIONS OR THE ATTACKS ON OPPOSITION PARTY SUPPORTERS. IN RESPONSE, AMBASSADOR MCDONALD, IN THE STRONGEST TERMS, CHASTISED THE GOZ AND THE ZANU-PF PARTY FOR ORGANIZING AND ENCOURAGING THE POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND INTIMIDATION. END SUMMARY.

2. (C) FOLLOWING THE APRIL 26 SIGNING OF THE U.S.-ZIMBABWE EXTRADITION TREATY, AMBASSADOR MCDONALD MEET PRIVATELY WITH MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS, DUMISO DABENGWA, TO RAISE OUR CONCERNS OVER THE ONGOING AND EVER INCREASING POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN ZIMBABWE. AMBASSADOR MCDONALD, ACCOMPANIED BY POLOFF (NOTETAKER), EXPRESSED U.S. CONDEMNATION OF AND DISGUST WITH THE POLITICAL VIOLENCE OCCURRING ON THE OCCUPIED COMMERCIAL FARMS AGAINST BLACK FARM WORKERS, INCLUDING REPORTS OF LYNCHINGS, BEATINGS, AND RAPES, AS WELL AS THE DEATHS OF THE TWO WHITE FARMERS THE WEEK OF APRIL 16, AND GENERAL INTIMIDATION OF FARM OWNERS BY THE OCCUPYING "WAR VETERANS" AND THEIR HIRED BACKERS. ADDITIONALLY, THE AMBASSADOR URGED THE GOVERNMENT TO ACT AGGRESSIVELY TO

STOP THE ESCALATING POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND TO UPHOLD LAW AND ORDER BY ARRESTING AND PROSECUTING PERPETRATORS OF THESE CRIMES. SPECIFICALLY, THE AMBASSADOR INQUIRED ABOUT THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPONSE TO THE PETROL BOMB MURDERS OF TWO MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE (MDC) SUPPORTERS IN BUHERA ON APRIL 15 AND THE FATAL BEATINGS OF TWO OTHER MDC SUPPORTERS IN KARIBA ON APRIL 25 (REFTEL A). THE AMBASSADOR INFORMED THE MINISTER THAT HE HAD URGED PRESIDENT MUGABE TO TAKE A LEADERSHIP ROLE IN STOPPING THE POLITICAL VIOLENCE (REFTEL B).

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13. (C) MINISTER DABENGWA RESPONDED BY EXPRESSING HIS CONCERN ABOUT THE BREAKDOWN IN LAW AND ORDER, BUT WENT ON TO SEPARATED THE VIOLENCE ON THE COMMERCIAL FARMS FROM THE BROADER ELECTION-RELATED ASSAULTS AND DEATHS. THE MINISTER WEAKLY ARGUED THAT THE OCCUPATIONS OF THE FARMS BY WAR VETS AND OTHERS WERE THE RESULT OF A LONGSTANDING POLITICAL PROBLEM IN THE COUNTRY THAT REQUIRED A "POLITICAL SOLUTION." IN THE PAST, WHEN COMMERCIAL FARMS WERE OCCUPIED BY COMMUNAL FARMERS WHO HAD GROWN IMPATIENT WAITING FOR LAND RESETTLEMENT, LOCAL POLITICIANS WOULD BE DISPATCHED BY THE GOVERNMENT TO RESOLVE THE CRISIS AND NEGOTIATE A PEACEFUL REMOVAL. THE POLICE HAVE NEVER EVICTED FARM OCCUPIERS BASED ONLY ON A COURT ORDER, DABENGWA ADDED. THE SAME STRATEGY IS NOW BEING EMPLOYED TO NEGOTIATE A SOLUTION TO THE OCCUPATIONS BY THE WAR VETS. CONSEQUENTLY, NEITHER HIS MINISTRY NOR THE POLICE WILL INTERFERE WITH THE OCCUPIERS AS LONG AS THEY REMAIN PEACEFUL, I.E., IF THE SQUATTERS REFRAINED FROM INTIMIDATION, PROPERTY DAMAGE, OR PHYSICAL HARM TO THE RESIDENTS, THE MINISTER STATED.

14. (C) WHEN AMBASSADOR MCDONALD PRESSED THE MINISTER ON POLICE FAILURE TO DO THEIR JOB OR TO DO SO IN A TIMELY MANNER IN THE DEATHS OF THE TWO COMMERCIAL FARMERS OR IN

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	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-01	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00
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P 271546Z APR 00  
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5885  
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
AMEMBASSY LONDON  
AMEMBASSY PARIS  
NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 02 OF 03 HARARE 002297

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OTHER CASES OF PHYSICAL ASSAULT ON BLACK FARM WORKERS, THE MINISTER INSISTED THEY POLICE "DID THEIR BEST" IN LIGHT OF THEIR TRANSPORT AND FORCE SIZE LIMITATIONS. THE MINISTER'S PERMANENT SECRETARY, TINAYE CHIGUDU, CHIMED IN THAT WE DID NOT HAVE ACCURATE INFORMATION AND QUESTIONED WHETHER SOME OF THE INCIDENTS OCCURRED. AMBASSADOR MCDONALD CUT CHIGUDU SHORT AND INSISTED THE INFORMATION THE EMBASSY HAD WAS CREDIBLE. DABENGWA SAID THAT THE POLICE WERE INVESTIGATING THE TWO FARM DEATHS, AND PROMISED TO SHARE THE REPORT WITH THE AMBASSADOR WHEN COMPLETED.

15. (C) DABENGWA RECOUNTED HOW HE HAD INITIALLY INSTRUCTED THE POLICE TO REMOVE THE OCCUPIERS DURING THE FIRST WEEKS OF THE COMMERCIAL FARM INVASIONS THREE MONTHS AGO. AT THAT TIME, HE SAID HE PERSONALLY TOLD THE CHAIRMAN OF THE WAR VETERANS ASSOCIATION, CHENJERI "HITLER" HUNZVI, TO ORDER THE VETS TO VACATE THE FARMS. HUNZVI WAS REPORTEDLY EN ROUTE TO AN OCCUPIED FARM TO DELIVER THAT MESSAGE WHEN PRESIDENT MUGABE'S CONTRADICTORY INSTRUCTION THAT THE VETS COULD REMAIN PEACEFULLY WAS BROADCAST OVER THE RADIO. AT THAT POINT, HUNZVI CEASED HIS EFFORTS TO HAVE THE VETS LEAVE THE OCCUPIED FARMS. THE MINISTER LAMENTED THAT HE DID NOT HAVE A CHANCE TO CONSULT WITH THE PRESIDENT IN ADVANCE

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OF MUGABE'S STATEMENT, AS HE WOULD HAVE TRIED TO TALK HIM OUT OF TAKING SUCH A POSITION ON THE OCCUPATIONS, DABENGWA SAID.

16. (C) THE MINISTER THEN DESCRIBED UNSUCCESSFUL EFFORTS BY HIMSELF AND OTHER SENIOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN THE CABINET AND ZANU-PF POLITBURO TO END THE OCCUPATIONS, INCLUDING VICE PRESIDENT JOSEPH MSIKA'S FLIP-FLOP ON THE ISSUE. NEVERTHELESS, THE ISSUE OF ESCALATING POLITICAL VIOLENCE CONTINUED TO BE DISCUSSED AMONG SENIOR OFFICIALS, MOST RECENTLY IN THE APRIL 25 CABINET AND POLITBURO MEETING. DABENGWA NOTED THAT THE AMBASSADOR'S MESSAGE ON THIS ISSUE TO THE PRESIDENT WAS THE MOST THAT COULD BE DONE, AS MUGABE WAS INSISTING ON NO FORCED REMOVALS. THE MINISTER RESIGNEDLY SAID HIS HANDS WERE TIED AS WERE THE POLICE, AS THERE WAS "NO POLITICAL WILL" TO END THE OCCUPATIONS AT THE MOMENT.

17. (C) TURNING TO THE ISSUE OF GENERAL ELECTION POLITICAL VIOLENCE, DABENGWA INSISTED THAT THE POLICE WERE CONDUCTING INVESTIGATIONS AND MAKING ARRESTS. ADDITIONALLY, THE MINISTER SAID HE HAD INSTRUCTED THE POLICE COMMISSIONER TO PREPARE A WEEKLY SUMMARY OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE INCIDENTS, INCLUDING ARRESTS, WHICH HE GAVE US A COPY OF DATED APRIL 16 TO 23. (COMMENT: THE REPORT MERELY CATALOGS THE NUMBER OF ZANU-PF AND OPPOSITION PARTY RALLIES, GENERICALLY IDENTIFIES ARRESTS OF PARTY MEMBERS, AND DRYLY STATES THE NUMBER OF DEATHS. THERE ARE NO REPORTS OF ANY ARREST IN CONNECTION WITH THE FARM OR POLITICAL PARTY DEATHS SO FAR. THERE ARE ALSO NO NAMES OF SUSPECTS OR REFERENCE TO ANY POLICE

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FOLLOW-UP ACTION. END COMMENT.)

18. (C) MINISTER DABENGWA INSISTS THAT THE LOCAL POLICE AUTHORITIES WILL BE GIVEN COPIES OF THESE WEEKLY REPORTS AND INSTRUCTED TO FOLLOW-UP. DABENGWA ALSO STATED THAT A ZANU-PF SUPPORTER HAD BEEN ARRESTED IN CONNECTION WITH THE MURDERS OF THE TWO MDC SUPPORTERS IN BUHERA. THE AMBASSADOR RESPONDED THAT THE POLICE SHOULD PUBLICIZE ANY SUCH ARRESTS, AS THERE WAS CURRENTLY NO NEWS ON POLICE EFFORTS TO END THE POLITICAL VIOLENCE, WHICH, IN TURN, WAS ENCOURAGING MORE VIOLENCE. DABENGWA SAID HE INTENDS TO HAVE THE REPORTS OF VIOLENCE AND THE SUBSEQUENT ARRESTS PUBLISHED IN THE NEWSPAPERS. AT AN MDC PRESS CONFERENCE ON APRIL 26, HOWEVER, MDC PRESIDENT MORGAN TSVANGIRAI INSISTED THAT THE POLICE WERE NOT INVESTIGATING THE ATTACKS ON MDC SUPPORTERS, AS THE POLICE CLAIM TO BE UNDER INSTRUCTIONS THAT SUCH CRIMES ARE "POLITICAL MATTERS" AND NOT APPROPRIATE FOR POLICE INTERFERENCE. THE AMBASSADOR CONCLUDED BY URGING THE GOVERNMENT TO ACT DECISIVELY TO END THE VIOLENCE ON THE FARMS AND AMONG POLITICAL PARTY OPPONENTS, AND RETURN TO AN ORDERLY LAND REFORM PROGRAM AS AGREED TO IN SEPTEMBER 1998 AT THE LAND CONFERENCE. AMBASSADOR MCDONALD WENT ON TO STATE THAT THE POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN THE RURAL AREAS IS DIRECTED AGAINST THE WEAKEST GROUP, THE FARM

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	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-01	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00
	LAB-01	L-00	AC-01	NSAE-00	OIC-02	OMB-01	OPIC-01
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P 271546Z APR 00  
FM AMEMBASSY HARARE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5886  
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA  
AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY PARIS  
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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 03 OF 03 HARARE 002297

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TO STOP THE POLITICAL VIOLENCE

WORKERS, WHO ARE THE LEAST ABLE TO DEFEND THEMSELVES.

19. (C) COMMENT: THE ONGOING POLITICAL VIOLENCE IN ZIMBABWE IS DESIGNED TO SET THE STAGE FOR A ZANU-PF WIN IN THE UPCOMING PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION. THE BATTLE FOR THE MAJORITY OF VOTES WILL PLAY OUT IN THE RURAL AREAS (REFTEL C). CONSEQUENTLY, MUGABE BELIEVES HE CAN WIN ONLY IF HE CONTINUES ALLOWING ENOUGH INSTABILITY IN THE RURAL AREAS TO ENSURE THAT AN INTIMATED ELECTORATE STICKS WITH ZANU-PF. NEITHER THE HOME AFFAIRS MINISTER NOR OTHERS IN SENIOR GOVERNMENT POSITIONS ARE ABLE TO INFLUENCE PRESIDENT MUGABE TO STOP THE ELECTION VIOLENCE. THOSE WHO PROFESS ABHORRENCE OF THE VIOLENCE, LIKE DABENGWA, ARE EITHER TOO AFRAID FOR THEIR POLITICAL CAREERS OR TOO WEAK TO HAVE ANY IMPACT ON THE DEBATE. MUGABE IS AGAIN CALLING ALL THE SHOTS AND NO ONE BELOW HIM WILL TELL HIM JUST HOW DAMAGING THE VIOLENCE IS TO THE COUNTRY'S STABILITY AND REPUTATION. THERE IS A CHANCE THAT THE ZIMBABWEAN DELEGATION WHICH IS PRESENTLY IN LONDON TO DISCUSS RESUMPTION OF DIALOGUE WITH THE UK ON LAND REFORM MAY GET A REALITY CHECK, BUT THE ODDS ARE AGAINST ANY QUICK SHIFT IN THE CURRENT STRATEGY. THE ISSUE IS A CRITICAL ONE AND A MATTER OF BASIC HUMAN RIGHTS REGARDING WHICH WE WILL CONTINUE TO SPEAK OUT.  
END COMMENT.

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MCDONALD

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